

# **PUBLIC HEALTH SCREENING AT U.S. PORTS OF ENTRY**

## ***A GUIDE FOR U.S. IMMIGRATION, CUSTOMS, AND AGRICULTURE INSPECTORS***

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*The U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) has statutory and regulatory responsibility to prevent the introduction, transmission, and spread of communicable disease from foreign countries into the United States. Applicable regulations are found in 42 CFR Parts 34 and 71. These responsibilities are delegated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Infectious Diseases, Division of Quarantine.*

*Quarantine stations are located at several major international airports; each quarantine station has responsibility for all ports in an assigned geographic area. You should know which quarantine station has jurisdiction over your port. Historically, PHS quarantine stations have been referred to in the port community simply as “PHS” or “Public Health.” As actual organizational names and assignments have changed over the years, that tradition has remained constant.*

*The Division of Quarantine is empowered to apprehend, detain, medically examine or conditionally release individuals (including U.S. citizens) suspected of having one of the following diseases:*

- < *Cholera and suspected cholera*
- < *Diphtheria*
- < *Infectious tuberculosis*
- < *Plague*
- < *Suspected smallpox*
- < *Yellow Fever*
- < *Suspected viral hemorrhagic fevers such as lassa, marburg, ebola, congo-crimean and others not yet isolated or named.*

*Foreign Quarantine regulations require that death or illness of an arriving international passenger or crew member is to be reported by the captain of the arriving ship or plane to the quarantine station having responsibility for the port of entry; however, illnesses are not always reported. The following guidelines should be observed by all inspection personnel.*

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### **I. INSPECTION OF ARRIVING PERSONS:**

- A. **Observe** all arriving passengers and crew for signs and symptoms of illness, such as rash, unusually flushed or pale complexion, jaundice (unusual yellowing of skin and eyes), shivering, profuse sweating, diarrhea, and inability to walk without assistance.

B. A person is considered to be **ill** in terms of Foreign Quarantine regulations when symptoms meet the following criteria:

1. Temperature of 100 degrees F. (38°C.) or greater which is accompanied by one or more of the following: rash, jaundice, glandular swelling, or which has persisted for 2 days or more.
2. Diarrhea severe enough to interfere with normal activity or work (three or more loose stools within 24 hours or a greater than normal number of loose stools).

C. **Hold ill passengers and crew, and ask for details about symptoms and itinerary.** At a port of entry where a quarantine station is staffed, that station should be notified and a quarantine inspector will investigate. If there is no quarantine inspector at your port, the appropriate quarantine station should be notified. The quarantine station will release or conditionally release the ill person, or if the circumstances warrant, call a physician to conduct an examination and recommend appropriate action.

## II. CHECK ITINERARY:

It is sometimes necessary to check the itinerary of arriving persons because of the possibility of an outbreak of a communicable disease in a foreign area. Knowledge of the itinerary helps in determining the appropriate preventive measures. If this situation should arise, CDC will direct that each arriving person be asked if he/she has been in the infected country within a specified number of days. If so, the person is to be referred to the appropriate quarantine station.

## III. HEALTH ALERT NOTICE:

- A. Issue a Health Alert Notice (form CDC 75.8) to each arriving person, or to each adult in a family group.
- B. A Health Alert Notice need not be issued to routine border crossers at the U.S.-Mexican Border and U.S.-Canadian Border ports of entry.

#### IV. MEDICAL INSPECTION OF ARRIVING ALIENS:

*The instructions in Section V are in accordance with HHS Interim Rule in 42 CFR Part 34, published May 31, 1991, and are subject to change. Inspectors may contact the Quarantine Station having jurisdiction over their port if there are concerns about whether these instructions are still current.*

The Immigration Act of 1990 revised the health-related grounds for exclusion of aliens under Section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act as of June 1, 1991. The amended Section 212(a) provides for the exclusion of any alien who: (1) is determined to have a communicable disease of public health significance,<sup>1</sup> (2) has or had a physical or mental disorder with associated behavior that poses or may pose a threat to the property, safety, or welfare of the alien or others, or (3) is a drug abuser or addict.

Inspectors should immediately advise the appropriate quarantine station when an immigrant arrives without medical documents or with incomplete medical documents.

- A. When processing aliens, DO NOT keep the alien's chest X-ray film. This is an important medical document that the alien should retain as part of his/her permanent health records.
- B. Refer to the appropriate quarantine station all aliens for whom a "Medical Hold" (form CDC 75.40) should be issued. Candidates for a "Medical Hold" are:
  - 1. All aliens who are not routinely required to have a medical examination and who, upon arrival in the U.S., exhibit a physical condition which may be excludable under Section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
  - 2. All aliens who are not routinely required to have a medical examination and who, upon arrival in the U.S., exhibit variations in behavior which may indicate a physical or mental disorder that may pose a threat to the property, safety or welfare of the alien or others, and may be excludable under Section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
  - 3. All aliens who require a medical examination overseas (immigrants, refugees, fiance(e) of U.S. citizens and their minor children), but who arrive without evidence or with incomplete evidence of having had one performed, or with one that has expired. Satisfactory evidence can consist of a properly completed "Medical Examination of Applicants for United States Visas" (form OF-157), with results of chest X-ray and serologic tests for syphilis and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

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<sup>1</sup> Currently, the same diseases previously classified as "Dangerous Contagious Diseases" which are: Chancroid; Gonorrhea; Granuloma Inguinale; Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection; Leprosy, infectious; Lymphogranuloma Venereum; Syphilis, infectious stage; and Tuberculosis, active.

infection indicated. (NOTE: Chest X-ray and serologic tests are required for aliens 15 years of age and older.)

- C. All aliens with a Class A condition or a Class B condition including tuberculosis, not infectious; and Hansen's disease [leprosy], not infectious. These aliens should have a stamp imprinted on the face of their visa (form OF-155A) as follows:

**CLASS A OR CLASS B  
REQUIRES ATTENTION  
OF USPHS AT POE**

While consular officers normally stamp the OF-155A when an immigrant has a medical condition of public health concern, this is sometimes not done. The inspector should check all OF-157's whether or not the "Attention PHS" stamp is present.

When quarantine station personnel are not available to process aliens with these medical conditions, retain a copy of the OF-157. On the reverse side, write the alien's U.S. address, sponsor's name and address, arriving flight and date, port of entry, and the INS inspector's name. A photocopy of the alien's visa (OF-155A) is satisfactory in lieu of transcribing this information on the reverse of the OF-157 provided that the address is correct on the OF-155A and that the flight number and date of arrival are recorded on the OF-155A prior to making the photocopy. The OF-155A and/or OF-157 with requested information should be given, mailed, or sent by FAX to the appropriate quarantine station.

If the alien has a Class A communicable disease of public health significance, copies of the OF-157, OF-155A, and both sides of the I-601 (being changed to new form I-724) waiver application should be given or mailed to the appropriate quarantine station. The statements to be completed by waiver applicants who are HIV positive or who have Hansen's disease will be affixed to the back of the I-601 waiver application by CDC Division of Quarantine staff. See IMMACT Wire #65 dated August 7, 1991 (not included in this text) for further information.

If the alien has a Class A physical or mental disorder with associated harmful behavior, a copy of USPHS/CDC form 4.422-1, "Statements in Support of Application for Waiver" should be given or mailed to the appropriate quarantine station, along with the OF-157, OF-155A, and I-601 (I-724).

NOTE: There is no waiver provision in the law for aliens applying for immigrant visas who are found to be excludable under Section 212(a)(1)(A)(iii) for drug abuse or addiction. If an alien arrives with a visa indicating Class A drug abuse or addiction, please refer to the appropriate quarantine station.

D. REFUGEES and ASYLEES: Refugees and asylees normally arrive at ports where quarantine inspectors are assigned, but this may not always be the case. Notify the appropriate quarantine station of all refugees and asylees entering the U.S. for the first time. If a quarantine inspector is not available to process the refugee or asylee, you will be asked to obtain the following information, normally by making copies of documents carried by the refugee or asylee. This information is necessary to ensure that all refugees and asylees receive a health screening and any appropriate immunizations or treatment at the place of resettlement:

Name of Refugee	Address of Sponsor
Sex	Telephone Number of Sponsor
Date of Birth	Name of Principal Sponsor (Voluntary Agency)
Country of Birth	Date of Arrival
Language Spoken	Flight and Block Time
"A" Number	Port of Arrival
Name of Local Sponsor	

E. PAROLEES - Every effort should be made to determine the tuberculosis status of parolees prior to release and refer those who are suspected of having infectious tuberculosis to the appropriate quarantine station.

V. IMPORTATIONS OF PUBLIC HEALTH IMPORTANCE:

A. The general requirement is that all dogs, cats, monkeys, and turtles intended for importation into the U.S. shall be visually examined by inspecting personnel. Only those animals which are free of gross evidence of infectious diseases may be admitted. Animals which show signs of illness such as emaciation, lesions of the skin, nervous system disturbances, jaundice or diarrhea shall be examined, tested, or treated by a licensed veterinarian at the owner's expense. Refer to the appropriate quarantine station when the above conditions are present. Specific requirements are as follows:

1. Cats

Subject only to the general requirements for entry as stated above. Rabies vaccination is not required.

2. Dogs

a. Regardless of age, dogs may be released without restriction if they appear to be healthy and have been exclusively in a rabies-free area for at least 6 months immediately preceding arrival or since birth. Consult a quarantine station or the most recent printed copy of this text for a current list of rabies-free areas.

b. Dogs arriving from countries other than those listed as rabies-free may be admitted if they meet all of the following requirements:

(1) 3 months of age or older

(2) free of gross evidence of infectious disease

(3) accompanied by a valid certificate of vaccination against rabies. This certificate shall:

(a) identify the dog

(b) be signed by a licensed veterinarian

(c) specify the expiration date which should not be earlier than the date of arrival; if the expiration date is not indicated on the certificate, it shall be valid for only 1 year from the date of issue.

(d) specify the date of vaccination which shall not be less than 30 days prior to the date of arrival.

- c. For a dog that is subject to the rabies vaccination requirement and appears to be healthy, but does not have a valid rabies certificate as outlined above, CDC form 75.37 (formerly CDC 4.421) must be completed and forwarded to the appropriate Quarantine Station for distribution. The form must be signed by the owner or agent. CDC 75.37 is to be prepared when:
- (1) The dog is more than 3 months old and has **no certificate**. Release the dog provided the owner agrees to place the dog in confinement immediately upon arrival at destination and have it vaccinated against rabies within 4 days. The dog must then be confined for an additional 30 days following vaccination. Confinement is defined as restriction of the animal to a building or other enclosure, in isolation from other animals and people, except for contact necessary for its care. If allowed out of the enclosure, the owner must muzzle the dog and use a leash.
  - (2) The dog is more than 3 months old and has a certificate showing a **vaccination done less than 30 days prior to arrival**. The owner is required to confine the dog for the balance of 30 days.
  - (3) If the dog is less than 3 months old. The owner is required to confine the dog until it is 3 months old, then have it immunized and confined for 30 additional days. (A certificate presented for a dog less than 3 months old cannot be accepted.)

### 3. Monkeys and Other Nonhuman Primates

- a. Live monkeys and other nonhuman primates may only be imported into the United States for scientific, educational, or exhibition purposes. They may **not** be imported for use as pets under any circumstances. Importers must be registered with CDC.
- b. Registered importers must also hold a special permit, issued by CDC, in order to import cynomolgus, rhesus or African green monkeys.
- c. Contact the appropriate quarantine station when primates are presented for entry to verify that the importer is currently registered as an importer of nonhuman primates, and that if required, a special permit has been issued. When a passenger-owned monkey arrives hand-carried or as baggage, isolate the animal and call the quarantine station for advice immediately. **DO NOT** handle the animal or allow others near its enclosure.
- d. Nonadmissible nonhuman primates are seized and re-exported to the country of origin, donated to facilities approved by CDC, or destroyed.

Form CDC 75.10D is to be used. Quarantine station staff will provide guidance.

- e. Nonhuman primates which are part of a legitimate animal act may, if appropriately registered with CDC, be transported from and returned to the U.S. The CDC registration for these acts is in the form of a letter on CDC letterhead, and grants re-importation privileges only for specific animals (i.e., no new primates may be imported as part of an animal act). The letter must be presented at the time of entry in order to satisfy CDC requirements for re-importation.

#### 4. Turtles

- a. A person may import live turtles with a carapace (shell) length of less than 4 inches (measured in a straight line from front to back) and viable turtle eggs into the United States if the importation is not for commercial purposes, and provided that the person imports no more than 1 lot containing fewer than 7 live turtles or fewer than 7 viable turtle eggs, or any combination thereof totaling fewer than 7. Anyone importing more than the permitted amount must present a letter of permit from CDC. Importation of turtles with a shell length of less than 4 inches for COMMERCIAL PURPOSES is not permitted.
- b. CDC has no restrictions on the importation of live turtles with a carapace length of more than 4 inches.

#### 5. Goatskin Products

Untanned goatskin products from Haiti are banned from importation into the United States because they may carry Anthrax. These items must be seized and incinerated. Precautions must be observed in handling goatskin products from Haiti.

#### 6. Dead Bodies

Examine the death certificate to determine the cause of death. Admit unless the person died of a quarantinable disease (cholera, plague, yellow fever, infectious tuberculosis, diphtheria, suspected smallpox, suspected viral hemorrhagic fever), in which case the casket must be hermetically sealed. If there is no evidence the casket is hermetically sealed, hold and contact to the appropriate quarantine station for instructions. Ashes may be admitted without restriction regardless of the cause of death.

#### 7. Used Tire Casings



To prevent importation of the Aedes albopictus mosquito and possible introduction, transmission, or spread of communicable diseases by these mosquitoes, CDC requires that all used tire casings originating from Asia be certified as dry, clean, and disinfected. This requirement was imposed under the authority of Section 361 of the Public Health Service Act and 42 CFR 71.32(c).

Once the exporter accomplishes disinsection, he must complete a CDC form Certification of Mosquito-Free Cargo (Used Tires). All of the necessary information must be listed on the certificate, including the method of disinsection used, and the certificate must be signed by the exporter. A certificate is required for each separate container of tires.

The U.S. Customs Service verifies that each container of used tire casings from Asia is accompanied by a valid Certification of Mosquito-Free Cargo (Used Tires) before releasing the cargo. Containers which do not have proper documentation are kept separate from other cargo pending appropriate disposition. Costs incurred for final disposition, including disinsection at the U.S. port of entry, must be borne by the importer. Notify the appropriate quarantine station of any used tire casing shipments received without proper documentation.

8. Classes of Imports Requiring Permits.

It is impracticable to list all of the several hundred species of etiologic agents and vectors requiring a permit. The intent of the permit requirement is to control the importation of etiologic agents and vectors, and ensure that permitted shipments are adequately packaged. The following classes of imports require a permit issued by CDC; any shipment for which a permit has been issued may be immediately released:

- a. Any living insect, or other living arthropod, known to be or suspected of being infected with any disease transmissible to humans; also, if alive, any bedbugs, fleas, flies, lice, mites, mosquitoes, or ticks even if uninfected. This includes eggs, larvae, pupae, and nymphs as well as adult forms.
- b. Any animal known to be or suspected of being infected with any disease transmissible to humans.
- c. All live bats.
- d. Unsterilized specimens of human and animal tissue (including blood), body discharges and excretions, or similar material, when known to be or suspected of being infected with disease transmissible to humans.
- e. Any culture of living bacteria, virus, or similar organism known to cause or suspected of causing human diseases.

- f. Any snails capable of transmitting schistosomiasis.

If any of the above items arrive without the necessary permit or if there are any questions concerning release, please call the appropriate quarantine station for instructions.

VI. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Whenever a Federal inspector has any questions regarding public health entry requirements for persons or importations, he/she should contact (day or night) the appropriate quarantine station or Division of Quarantine headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia.

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